GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
DEFENCE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1863
ANSWERED ON:30.11.2000
CRASH OF IAF HELICOPTER
RAMJI MANJHI

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned The IAF helicoptercrashed on Sunday noon but help came for survivors late on Monday With salt in our wounds, we waited for help appearing in the 'Indian Express' dated November 15, 2000;

(b) if so, whether the rescue operation was not provided in time resulting in loss of precious lives of some IAF/BSF officers;

(c) if so, the reasons attributed thereto;

(d) whether the Government have investigated the reasons for the helicopter crash; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and the follow up action taken thereon? ANSWER

Answer

MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES)

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (e): A statement is attached.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (b) TO (e) OF LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.1863.FOR 30.11.2000

A MI-8 Helicopter crashed at about 1300 hrs on12.11.2000 in Sir Creek Area in Gujarat. The helicopter had got airborne from Air Force Station Naliya for Koteshwar at 1107 hrs on 12th November, 2000. The helicopter landed at Koteshwar at 1128hrs and subsequently, got airborne at 1217 hrs. It was scheduled to land back at Koteshwar at 1345 hrs on completion of task and return to Naliya at 1420 hrs. It was not seen or heard on communication channels after 1300 hrs. Inquiries of whereabouts of the helicopter started being made by Air Traffic Controller, Naliya from 1450 hrs.

A search helicopter was sent from Jamnagar for Naliya at 1820 hrs on 12th November, 2000. After arrival at Naliya, with due briefing, it departed for search with night vision devices. But the search was unsuccessful because of poor visibility. On 13th November, 2000 second search helicopter was also positioned a t Bhuj from Jamnagar but the search was, again, unsuccessful. Thereafter, both search helicopters departed from Bhuj for search on 13th November, 2000 at 1200 hrs and the wreckage of the missing helicopter was sighted at about 1332 hrs. in water with no place for landing by (Air Sea Rescue) ASR helicopters. Three survivors were, initially, winched up and both the helicopters were then put for rescue operations with additional manpower and necessary devices. Thus, the IAF had undertaken all necessary search and rescue operations in the incident.

A Court of Inquiry has been ordered to find out the cause of the accident. The wreckage has been retrieved a t Bhuj. Damaged components have been sent to investigating agencies for analysis. However, the initial investigations do not indicate any signs of explosion.